

THE RECORDS OF THE SCOTTISH MISSIONARY SOCIETY (1796-1848)

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THIS paper is not intended to be a history of the Scottish Missionary Society, nor a criticism of its foreign mission policy, but an examination of such manuscript records as are known to exist and which the writer has had the privilege of studying. While welcoming the further light thrown on the incident in the Assembly of 1796, mentioned in vol. X part 1 of this Society's *Records*, in which Dr. John Erskine explained "Moderator, rax me that Bible," and yet failed to get the Assembly to make an official beginning of foreign mission work, it appears to be held in many circles that the Scottish Church, especially the Established Church, was against foreign missions. Principal Watt, in *Thomas Chalmers and the Disruption*, has pointed out that the debate concerned the difficulty of ministers of the Church, under the authority of the Assembly, taking up work under any one of the various missionary societies, and he has also dealt with the theory that the Moderates were against, and the Evangelicals for, this great enterprise. The records now being surveyed revealed how wise that Assembly was in seeing the difficulties of dual control and dual loyalty. They also reveal that the non-existence of an official committee on foreign missions until 1829 was no bar to ministers of the established Church going out as missionaries.

In 1695 the Scottish Estates passed a Bill incorporating a company for trading with Africa, the Indies and Panama. The expedition was a failure, but two ministers went with the first fleet and four with the second (in 1700) and their instructions were to "preach to their own countrymen, and to evangelise the heathen." In 1732, the Scottish S.P.C.K. (founded 1709) engaged three missionaries for North America, and the General Assembly granted a collection for the work. It amounted that year to £543. In 1764 that Society asked parish ministers for funds to train native pastors, and got £2,529. In 1796, when the Glasgow and Edinburgh Missionary Societies were founded, £700 was raised the first month, but it is to be noted that "strict dissenters held aloof because Church of Scotland men were in the Scottish missionary societies."

Much information could be gathered from the popular reports in such magazines as the *Religious Monitor*, the *Missionary Register*, the *Scottish Missionary Register* and annual reports of the Scottish Missionary Society, but these were all intended for propaganda purposes, and apart from lengthy and pious observations, and long accounts of Christian death-bed scenes, in the nature of the case leave gaps in the story.

The last meeting of Directors of the Scottish Missionary Society was held in Edinburgh on 6th January, 1848, and the following records were ordered to be preserved entire :

1. Minute books since the commencement of the Society.
2. Treasurer's books since the commencement of the Society.
3. Letter books containing copies of letters to missionaries.
4. The whole of the treasurer's vouchers.
5. The whole of the letters from missionaries.
6. Printed accounts and reports, etc. (which are detailed.)
7. Works published by missionaries of the Society ; which include a Tartar translation of the *New Testament*, and a Tartar translation of the *Pentateuch* ; Dr. Stevenson's *Mahratta Grammar*, etc., etc.
8. A quantity of Jamaican newspapers.

Other papers, home correspondence, etc. were to be destroyed, but in addition to the printed reports, several printed documents, e.g. a letter addressed to missionary candidates, and an address to congregations in Jamaica on the subject of self-support, were also to be preserved.

Apart from the reports in print in the *Religious Monitor*, 1796-1802, the *Missionary Magazine*, 1803-1819, and the *Scottish Missionary Register*, 1820-1847, the only records which have been preserved are two minute books and five correspondence books, with two small bundles of documents and loose papers.

I

THE MINUTE BOOKS.

The first extant minute book is bound in calf and measures $13\frac{1}{4}$ ins. by 9 ins. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. externally, each page measuring $12\frac{3}{4}$ ins. by 8 ins., the first 18 pages being blank and unnumbered. Pages 1-690 contain the minutes of the Board of Directors, and pages 692-712 are an index, followed by pages 713-730 which were meant for an index as that word is written in red at the top of each page, although the pages themselves are blank.

The first minute is dated " August 24th, 1824," with George Ross, Esq., in the chair, and in addition there were eight directors and two secretaries

present. No reference is made to the fact of a previous minute book, yet there must have been one, if not two volumes, for the Scottish Missionary Society began as the Edinburgh Missionary Society in 1796, and adopted the name "Scottish" in 1819. As a rule, the minutes are not confirmed, and they are never signed. The meetings were held once a week, on Tuesday, in the early days, and always in Edinburgh, and a weekly prayer meeting was also held. The business of the Society was done by a Board of twenty Directors all resident in Edinburgh, of whom six were ministers in addition to the two secretaries. There were rarely more than twelve present at a meeting, and sometimes only four. The printed reports give the names of the Country Directors, of whom in 1824, there were 86, including two or three laymen, in addition to twelve in England and six in Ireland, and twelve vice-presidents. Directors were appointed for four years, and of the 23 new directors appointed in 1826, nine were drawn from what came to be the United Presbyterian Church, ten from the Established (of whom at least two joined the Free Church in 1843) and the other four I have not been able to trace. Ten years later, of 42 new directors, 18 were Established Church, and 24 from those Churches which formed the U.P. body in 1847. City Directors are put off the Board for infrequent attendance, and they are also called to account for absence from the prayer meetings. The numbers and proportions among the denominations is fairly consistent in this period, and whatever the Churches may have done officially, every group was represented, and the printed records show that collections were taken annually in hundreds of Churches throughout the land.

The Edinburgh Missionary Society was founded in 1796, and the first benefit sermon preached for it by Dr. Erskine, when the collection amounted to £145 1s. 6d. In 1797 it sent two missionaries to the West Coast of Africa, in 1800 three to Jamaica, and two to the South Sea Islands later. Its attention was then turned to Russia, and by 1819, when it adopted the name "Scottish Missionary Society" there were ten missionaries in Russia. During the decade covered in this volume, the Society employed 26 missionaries in all—five in Jamaica, six at Astrachan, three at Karass, one at Crimea, seven at Bombay, two at Orenburg, and two at St. Petersburg, and had to turn down requests from other places because of shortage of funds and of candidates.

Two subjects find a prominent place in the Minutes (i) the relations existing between the Directors and the missionaries, and (ii) the problem of finance, which becomes increasingly difficult.

George Blyth, who went to Jamaica in 1823, reported in his first journal that he had celebrated 19 marriages and admitted 26 persons to

communion. The Directors say nothing about the marriages—though such marriages were not recognised by civil law—but remind him of the danger of hasty admission to full Church membership. This is a perpetual problem, and no solution is ever found for it. In the same year, 1824, Dr. Ross, at Astrachan, is taken to task for engaging in medical work, as the purpose of his being there is “the conversion of souls.” A few months later, Blyth is again written to on his “hasty receptions” and objecting to his performing weddings on Sunday. Mr. Stevenson reported that on his voyage to India he had used the Church of England Liturgy “with modifications” for divine service and for a funeral. The Directors suggest that he adhere to the “simplicity of worship which is maintained by the Presbyterian Churches of this country.” In 1829 the Society objects to missionaries assisting each other at the Sacrament, mainly because they are not satisfied that arrangements can be made for divine service at the missionary’s own station. In 1830, the Directors became alarmed at the thought of a foundation stone being laid in the Name of the Trinity, and

“Resolved that as it appears from a letter of Mr. Waddell’s that a meeting of missionaries was to take place at the laying of the foundation stone of the Church at Port Maria, the Directors should express their hope that this would be done in a manner perfectly consistent with Christian simplicity, that the foundation stone would not be laid in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost as had been done in other instances; and that a particular account should be requested of the proceedings of the day.”

In a further letter to Messrs. Watson, Blyth and Chamberlain, they are warned again about assisting each other at the Sacrament, not simply on the grounds of leaving their own stations, but of “multiplying unnecessarily the services connected with that institution.” From time to time the regulations are quoted that “missionaries shall submit to the authority and instructions of the Directors.”

That authority was apt to be invoked in every sphere, and reveals more often the misunderstandings of the Directors than the need for missionary discipline. It was especially called in to justify the cutting down of expenses and allowances. In 1824 there are reports on a Widows’ & Orphans’ Fund under which the widow will receive one half-year’s salary, plus £20 per annum whilst she remains a widow, and a children’s allowance till age 18. In fact, allowances to widows, and to retired missionaries, were always *ex gratia*. In 1826, the idea of a Widows’ & Orphans’ Fund was departed from, but on 13th July, 1830, there is a lengthy report on this subject along with the subject of the early marriage of missionaries. Statistics are given of the probabilities of life in the civil service in the

East Indies, and from records of German and English missionary societies which show that, while in this country at the age of 26 the probability of life is $33\frac{1}{2}$ years, in India for Germans is it $21\frac{1}{2}$ and for English only 15 years. In India the mortality was greatest in the early years. While the average age of widows in the Church of Scotland is 49, and the mean duration of their subsequent lives is 19 years, the report states that missionaries' widows are likely to be under 49, and consequently will be a burden on the fund for longer. The practical solution suggested is to prevent early marriages.

"I know of no *sufficient* reason why missionaries should in respect of marriage be placed on a different footing from every other class of men. Other classes of society have to wait, five, eight, or a dozen years before they are in circumstances to enter into the married state . . . With a little prudent foresight I have little doubt they might in most instances get over the difficulty arising from their distance from home."

The report goes on to argue that of 44 German missionaries, 13 died in the first six years in India, leaving widows and children whose aggregate allowance would total £9,000 "a sum which might have been saved," had it not been for the practice of early marriages. The decision of the Directors after hearing this report was that a salary be fixed for the first five years, and then raised, whether the men were married or not; that no passage be paid for a wife, nor children's allowances for the first five years. That such an attitude was no new one may be gathered from a letter in 1826 to Mr. Dickson, Astrachan, which said:

"The toleration which was formerly allowed of a French teacher was called forth by the circumstance of Mr. Dickson's advanced daughter, that it was granted simply for the purpose of their being *perfected* in the knowledge of that language and with a *particular* view to their being thereby assisted in providing *for themselves*, but that it was not intended to the younger children."

This letter was followed by an address to the missionary students on the advantages of celibacy for missionaries going abroad:

"Without dwelling on the considerations in favour of marriage, as these would readily enough occur to themselves. . . ."

At the end of 1826, however, the Directors resolve to get a report on prospective brides, and this consists of a testimonial from their minister in Scotland. There is one instance where a Director journeys to Fife to interview a lady named by a missionary, without success, and the Board solemnly records that the Directors can do no more, for none of them can hear of any suitable bride. By 1834, owing perhaps to the low state of the

funds, we find that furloughs are disapproved of as a general policy, for missionaries, or their wives, may be unduly anxious about their children, and if they know the Society will pay the passages, they will discover reasons why home is attractive after a year or so.

In this volume, financial saving is achieved only by withdrawing some allowance to the mission, never in overhead charges. Blyth is told to study economy in buying furniture. Mr. McPherson's expenses from London were reduced from £30 to £20 because he had incurred greater expense in getting home from Russia. He had returned, incidentally dissolving his connection with the Society through not obtaining their permission beforehand, because of :

“ limited field of labour, unfavourable aspect of missionary affairs in consequence of the political state . . . restrictions of the Directors as to giving assistance to converts . . . and the inadequate support which he had received from the Society.”

It was at the same meeting that the Directors had to reply to a letter from Rev. Mr. Crawford of Earlstoun, accusing them of want of economy and mismanagement of funds. Here occurs the first mention of minutes having been read and approved, but there is no necessary connection between that fact and Mr. Crawford's letter.

It was in 1824, that the first proposal was made to withdraw all the missionaries from Tartary, partly on financial grounds, and partly owing to the difficulties of working with the Russian Government, and next year we find a proposal, subsequently carried out, to transfer the secular affairs of the Colony at Karass to the Basle Evangelical Missionary Society. Indeed, from this point onwards, finance gets an undue prominence. It is recommended, e.g. :

“ That Mr. Dickson should be sent to Karass . . . as in the event of his returning to this country he would necessarily be a considerable burden on the funds of the Society, without being in any degree useful.”

Mr. McAlpine, a former missionary, is told bluntly to get work at home to relieve the Society of expense as their funds are for the heathen, not for retired missionaries. The students' pocket money, however, is raised from £2 to £4 4s. per annum. Some saving was effected by the breaking up of the Astrachan mission in 1826, and the property at Orenburg was sold the same year. By 1833, however, there was an overdraft of £1,500, and all the Directors could do, apparently, was to resolve that it was inadvisable to :

“ Pay salaries and extras . . . still less is it deemed advisable to come under an engagement to make provision for the individual in case of age or disability or for his widow and children.”

There is repeated reference to the "expense" of missionaries and salaries are fixed at £200 all-inclusive, plus £50 for married men, but only after the first six years, as "this will be a deterrent to marriage." The only exceptions were the first three Jamaican missionaries who had wisely made separate agreements. By this time, the Directors note that the Established Church and the Associate Synod have missions in India and Canada respectively, and there will be less support from members of these churches. Reference is also made to the "controversy which has lately commenced relative to religious Establishment, and the separation to which this is likely to lead," as a factor in further reduction of funds. This was in 1832. The following year there is a suggestion to give up the mission house in Edinburgh, but no decision is then come to. It is occupied by Dr. Brown, the Secretary and Tutor, who receives £200 per annum. The recommendations of a sub-committee on finance make sad reading. A Mr. Fraser now has a salary (as a home missionary) of £40, and he had made £60 in 3½ years by translation work. His pension from the Scottish Missionary Society was £60, and it is recommended that his pension be cut off as "if he is thrown on his own, he will provide for his family." A Mr. Mitchell now has a salary of £80 a year and "considering that his family are now nearly off his hands, the sub-committee have no hesitation in recommending that his allowance from the Society should cease *simpliciter*." While Mr. McAlpine, with a large family and many afflictions, has been "an expensive missionary and his services have not been very efficient," and is to have his debts enquired into, and them, and him, paid off.

The second volume of Minutes begins in August, 1834, and follows the first volume without a break. This volume is also bound in calf, and is approximately the same size as the first, but with only 571 pages. It might fittingly be styled *The Decline and Fall of the Scottish Missionary Society*, for it makes sorry reading, even with the back-ground knowledge that Scotland was in a unsettled state ecclesiastically in those years, and between the diminishing enthusiasm of earlier years and the increase of official Church Missions, the Directors became over-familiar with debit balances.

At the first meeting here recorded, a mission to Madras is proposed, but it has to be dropped, as the person who promised £150 per annum towards it had died, and the Society's funds were only £110. Finance also lay behind the reasons of dissent (2 pages) against sending a new missionary to Jamaica, and answers are recorded covering five pages. The impression is that the Directors had got to the stage of quarrelling among themselves, and their replies to letters from former missionaries in financial straits consists of quotation of "rules," that funds are for the

heathen. In 1834, they decide that seat-rents in Jamaica are to go towards missionaries' salaries. The debit balance increases steadily, and to all the offers of the service for the newly emancipated negroes in the West Indies, for teaching, for an academy, and for a theological college, the answers may be summed up in one phrase: Your idea is good, but do not involve the Society in additional expense. By 1836, the income had dropped from £4,338 in 1833-4 to £1,925, the treasurer gave up his salary. By 1837, only three Directors are present at the meetings, and thereafter rarely more than five. The rooms are given up, the Secretary's salary reduced to £100, and the Society's library of Oriental and other books disposed of, a Tartar dictionary being presented to the British Museum. In 1829, the missionaries in India had been received into the Church of Scotland, but in 1840, the Society, which had agreed to pay a sum of £400 per annum to the Assembly for their support, found itself unable to do so as its debit balance for the year was £1,706. Missions proposed to Haiti, Africa, and the Azores were all turned down, and the Society actually asked the Jamaican churches to send it financial help. And when Hope Masterton Waddell was sent to Africa, it was by the Jamaica Mission Presbytery and the native Church members, for the Scottish Missionary Society refused to accept financial responsibility. The Society would have been dissolved before 1848, but there were one or two legacies which the Directors felt would be more easily dealt with if it remained in existence. By 1847, however, even these considerations failed to find supporters, and arrangements were made for the final transfer of the Jamaica mission—the only one still under the Society—to the United Secession Church Board of Missions, as nearly all the missionaries were ministers of the Church. On 23rd March, 1847, the United Presbyterian Board of Missions is first mentioned, and the transfer to it takes place on 1st July, 1847, the rooms at 6 York Place are given up, and out of the funds Dr. Brown, the remaining secretary, is given £1,000 for "inadequate remuneration of his past services." The minute is signed and dated at Edinburgh by James Marshall, 28th December, 1847. The annual meeting is held at 6 York Place, on 6th January, 1848, and the volume closes with a list of the records to be preserved, as mentioned in the beginning of this paper.

This volume certainly continues the line of thought indicated in a report to the Directors in 1832, where it is stated:

"Should this institution be allowed to go down, the cause of Missions from Scotland will sustain a severe blow—a blow from which it is not likely soon to recover. Though our Churches may make a commencement of Missions, there is no likelihood amidst the multiplicity of

affairs to which the Church courts have to attend that they will soon carry them on, on any considerable scale."

That prophecy has certainly not been fulfilled, and it need never have been made had the Directors realised that in Jamaica and in Bombay the requests for local presbyteries were not attempts to get rid of home authority, but movements of the spirits to further the Church of God in these lands. In 1827, e.g. the missionaries at Bombay started an annual meeting among themselves, and the Directors objected on grounds of expense, travelling away from stations, and

"the moral and religious discussions which is one object of it, and the danger of missionaries when assembled together combining for carrying measures for their common interest."

Furthermore, they are called to account for not submitting their proposal home first. Similarly, the men in Jamaica had met to determine a point and advise Mr. Watson of Lucea, and the Directors strongly disapprove of this and of "gratuitously expressing opinions as to the procedure of missionaries of other societies." In 1833, Messrs. Wilson, Nesbit and Mitchell wrote from India as to their intention to associate themselves and such of their American and English brethren as are agreed with them in doctrine and ecclesiastical polity in a presbyterial capacity as soon as circumstances may permit and Providence call them. Providence had apparently called, but the Directors quoted the rule of 1796: "Every missionary shall be accountable to the Society alone for the manner in which he shall fulfil his mission."

The result of such an attitude was that Wilson, Nesbit and Mitchell petitioned the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to be received into it as ministers, and the Society agree after discussion, and the mission is transferred as a unit. The Jamaica brethren went ahead and formed a Presbytery but the Society objected on the ground that it contained United Secession ministers, and suggested two Presbyteries, one for United Secession, and another for established Church ministers. The reply in brief was that the Presbytery was in being and as a court had certain rights, e.g. the right to dissolve the pastoral tie between minister and people. The Society also objected to the formation of a Jamaica Board of Missions under whose auspices the mission to Cayman and to Calabar was started. But the young Church went ahead, and the Society, for lack of funds, could not exert its former authority. In fact, the records show that it was the Presbyteries on the field which enabled the handing over of the Scottish Missionary Society's work to the various churches to be possible. The Society may have declined and fallen, but the mission churches were strong, and the cause of missions in Scotland went forward.

II

THE CORRESPONDENCE BOOKS

The five volumes of Correspondence Books cover a rather wider period, beginning in 1820, though here again there must be at least one volume missing, which would give interesting information on missionaries in New Zealand (there are references in the printed reports to at least six), in Malacca, ceded to the Dutch Government in 1818 (four missionaries are mentioned there), in the South Seas, and in Madagascar, as well as in Jamaica.

These five volumes are of uniform size, foolscap, bound in calf, with a red title slip and gold lettering indicating the original mission and names of subsequent fields in black ink on the outside. Each has a title on the inside, in ink, "Correspondence of the Scottish Missionary Society with . . ." and the date of its commencement. All five volumes seem to have been in use simultaneously, and the periods covered are as follows :

- i. Orenburg, January 1820—April 1827. Jamaica, 1824-1838.
- ii. Crimea, May 1820-1832. Home Correspondence, 1835-1837.
Jamaica, 1831-1838.
- iii. Karass, April 1821-1824.
- iv. Astrachan, May 1821 to the transfer of this mission.
Home Correspondence, 1835.
- v. Bombay, November 1822-1833, and correspondence with
Mr. Wilson there, 1828-1836.

In the Orenburg correspondence, the first 38 pages deals with plans for building, with accounts, and general work of the mission. The letters are dated, but not numbered, and there is only one marginal reference, on page 33. This section finishes on page 38, and there is a blank till page 51, where a letter is sent from 18 St John Street, Edinburgh, to Mr. Fraser, dismissing him after 17 years' service on 28th April, 1821. With the letter are two pages of a questionnaire for his self-examination. There are 64 letters from missionaries, each given only two or three lines indicating the contents, and these are numbered in the margin. The last is dated 13th April, 1827. Were it not that copious extracts from letters were printed in the Missionary Register, little information could be gathered as to the work at Orenburg. The other parts of this volume is concerned with Jamaica, 120 letters from Blyth, from 1824-1838, 34 from Chamberlain, 1827-1832, 26 from Simpson, 1832-37, though the first 13 of these are not numbered, and 77 from Watson. The Society had some difficulty in keeping track of the correspondence of Messrs. Watson and

Chamberlain, who frequently wrote joint letters. Mr. Simpson, on the other hand, maintained complete silence for a year and a half on one occasion, and only a threatened dismissal produced the eagerly-awaited copy of his daily "Journal" which all missionaries were instructed to keep. He maintained he was too busy to write up a list of his actions day by day. Of the 668 pages in this volume, a total of 488 have been written on. There is no index except three lines on the fly-leaf giving the pages on which the correspondence with Blyth, Simpson, and Watson is to be found.

The Crimea volume opens with ten blank and unnumbered pages, possibly intended for an index. It has in all 651 pages, of which only some 400 have been written upon. The only letters from the field which are given in full are from Prince Galitzin to the Directors of the "Scotch Missionary Society," of which the first, dated St. Petersburg, 5th May, 1820, states that His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia approves the setting up of a seminary and mentions the prejudices of the Tartars against Christianity. He approves also a proposal to translate the Scriptures, but suggests the Society send, not missionaries, but colonists, settlers, and teachers of youth. This policy, which is contrary to that advocated by the Directors elsewhere, e.g., when Dr. Ross is taken to task for practising medicine, and George Blyth for acting as overseer on an estate, and James Watson for daring to teach such things as arithmetic and geography, is not mentioned in the Directors' reply. All other letters from missionaries are noted in two or three lines each. Letters to the missionaries, however, are given in full, and deal in the main with the ordinary work of the mission in Crimea. Those to Crimea especially are very lengthy, 11¼ and 10½ pages being not unusual, but as those from the missionaries are only summarised, there is no means of knowing their length, except to state that extracts printed are by no means always short. The section ends at page 84 with a letter to the Sultan Katte Ghery.

After an interval, there are 8 pages headed "Home Correspondence" evidently to regularise the handing over to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland the Bombay mission, for the Assembly's minute is recorded in full. The remaining portions of this volume deal with correspondence with the Jamaica missionaries, 1838 being the latest date. Some difficulty occurs with the spelling of the name of Hope Masterton Waddell. At first it is "Waddle," then once "Waddel," but after he begins to write from the field, the spelling is correct, and the letters dated and numbered.

The Karass volume, also 651 pages, is on the same general lines, but only the first 136 pages are written on. The Astrachan volume is similar,

with 267 pages of correspondence about the mission, and pages 274-373 giving letters and replies, in full, from Sir George Grey, dated Downing Street, 10th September, 1835, on the subject of government grants for schools in Jamaica. The Secretary, Dr. David Dickson, writes on this occasion from the West Kirk Manse. The rest of this volume is blank, and after page 465 is not even numbered.

Finally, the Bombay volume begins in 1822 and deals with the general work of the mission for 261 pages. Then on page 351 there begins summaries of letters from Mr. Wilson, 33 in all, ending on page 377. From there to page 659 is blank.

With the exception of the Jamaica mission, these volumes may be said to contain the whole correspondence from 1820 to the end of the respective missions, either by transfer or by withdrawal. Orenburg was abandoned about 1825, Karass and Astrachan handed over to the Basle Evangelical Missionary Society between 1826 and 1829, Crimea a little later, Bombay to the established Church in 1835, and Jamaica to the United Presbyterian Synod in 1847. One aspect is clear in the correspondence, viz., the tremendous amount of obstructionism from the Russian authorities first in buying property, and then in disposing of it. Hence the varied dates of handing over the work in Russia. It was complicated, of course, by the Russo-Turkish war in 1827-29, and we find mention even as late as 1835 of two missionaries of the Society who were in fact agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society, but continued to act in transfer of property for this Society, and who still reported on their labours to it.

As records, these volumes have many points of interest in revealing the general attitude of the Directors to the work. On at least three occasions lengthy instructions are copied in full to each of three missionaries, which suggests that the secretaries were not overworked. It may have been necessary to send each man a copy, but hardly that thirteen-point document should be thrice written in full in books in the home office. The titles of these thirteen points indicated their content: Preach truth rather than attack error; dependence on God; prayer; diligence; zeal; economy; despair of success to be avoided; enquiry into want of success; brotherly love; beware of library books taking up too much time; lastly, beware of females . . . sometimes they prove the greatest of blessings . . . other times the greatest curse. This last section was probably the result of a moral lapse on the part of one missionary who protests at great length, and protests overmuch, in the case in question, though admitting the girl concerned might feel aggrieved, because of his "treatment of the woman in correcting her with a whip." The final letter to

this man is signed "Yours very faithfully," and by the President and three secretaries. The missionary is dismissed subsequently, as is another because of his "temper and spirit." A third is taken to task for "giving way to irritation and warmth," at imagined criticism of himself. The Directors are given to Biblical quotations and such phrases as "how gracious, how delightful is that declaration . . ." especially when pointing out faults.

The Board objected to the Presbytery of Astrachan in 1821 for applying to the Associate Synod to be recognised as a sister church, and when the reason is given that they want Mr. Blyth's ordination to be recognised, reply that when Presbytery was instituted in Scotland, no one applied to Geneva for recognition. They had similar difficulties with Presbytery in India, but in each case, as in Jamaica in 1836, the missionaries went ahead and formed Presbyteries, and more or less took up the position that Presbyteries, as courts, were not under the jurisdiction of a Board of Directors. In the latter case, Jamaica, that Presbytery took over almost the full responsibility of the mission, and when it was handed over to the U.P. Synod, the ties were very loose. Jamaica had then four presbyteries, and formed its own Synod in 1840, with all property vested in its local Corporation. It is in this field that there is a gap from 1838-1848 in the Correspondence, although the Minutes, as we have seen, are extant.

III

OTHER PAPERS AND LETTERS

I have also examined two bundles of papers of which the first has been preserved by an oversight, inasmuch as they are of the kind ordered to be destroyed at the last recorded meeting of the Society in 1848. A covering letter from Mr. James Dymock dated Edinburgh, 30th December, 1872, enclosing an extract from a memoir of Rev. Ebenezer Brown, by his nephew Dr. John Brown (published 1838), refers to a bundle of papers, in which Peter Greig's letters of application and testimonial is included, being sent by Mr. Dymock earlier, and I take it that all the papers in this bundle came from him, as his father, William Dymock, was clerk to the Edinburgh Missionary Society in 1796. The writing on the docquets is William Dymock's and additional notes are added and initialled by Mr. James Dymock in 1872. The following are the papers in chronological order:—

- i. A three-page foolscap printed letter, dated 18th March, 1796, signed by Rev. Greville Ewing, Secretary, from the Edinburgh Missionary Society to "them that hath obtained like precious faith with

us." Added thereto are the Regulations of the Society for its management, and for its missionaries, and a list of Directors, elected at the first meeting, with Rev. John Erskine in the Chair. This is the only copy of the Regulations known to exist.

2. Letter written by Rev. Ebenezer Brown, October 6th, 1796, recommending Peter Greig as a missionary to "Affrica" (sic.)

3. Two sheets of draft minutes in Mr. Ewing's writing, dated 11th October, 1796, at Merchants' Hall, dealing with Mr. Greig's application (he was thus the first missionary), and granting £50 to Mr. La Trobe as a donation to the Moravian Missions. One part is written on the back of a note in Mr. Dymock's writing referring to matters of detail in connection with a previous meeting, e.g. thanking Mr. Brown for his testimonial of Mr. Greig.

4. Peter Greig's letter accepting appointment, dated Donibristle (Fife), 7th November, 1796.

5. Letter dated Wamphray, 16th November, 1796, re contributions and the supply of the Missionary magazine, from Wm. Singer, acting minister.

6. Report of the Committee for Regulating the Prayer Meetings, dated from Merchant's Hall, 16th January, 1797, recommending these be in Lady Glenorchy's when parish ministers officiate, and in Mr. Peddie's meeting place when Dissenting ministers officiate.

7. Draft letter, dated 6th February, 1797, asking assistance from the East India Company in getting the Court to give permission to send missionaries to Bengal. Signed by Robert Haldane and Mr. Ewing.

8. Memorial from John Aikman respecting the best means of obtaining missionaries for Jamaica, read to the Society, 27th June, 1797.

9. Two copies of a Memorial on the means proper to be used in obtaining missionaries, one dated 27th June, 1797, the second copy having a footnote (in the same hand of write) stating the copy is corrected to suit observations made at the society meeting. The corrected copy is dated 5th July, 1797, and signed "John Campbell."

10. Report of the London Society on a mission to Africa, in which the Edinburgh and Glasgow Societies are invited to join, August, 1797.

11. Letter from Mr. Wm. Shrubsole, Secretary of the London Society, dated 12th September, 1797, from Scots Hall, London, with extract minutes regarding proposed arrangements for Africa.

The second bundle on examination proved to contain papers relating to the Scottish Society for the Conversion of Israel, but two documents did refer to the Scottish Missionary Society. The first consisted of seven typed pages of extract minutes of the U.P. Foreign Mission Committee, which revealed that the Scottish Missionary Society was still in existence in 1855, probably only to deal with legacies and the final transfer of property in Jamaica, which took place that year. The other document is the petition from the Glasgow Missionary Society (which considered itself a sister society rather than an auxiliary of the Scottish) to the U.P. Synod dated 17th May, 1847, to take over its work in Africa, and its funds. The only point I wish to note is that this society was founded on 6th February, 1796, a few weeks before the Edinburgh Society, and that the petition states its first work was in Sierra Leone, and its second in the West Indies, where work was "crushed by an enactment of the Legislative Council of Jamaica." It is known that three missionaries went to Jamaica in 1800—Joseph Bethune (minister of Renton, Presbytery of Chirnside) who died in June, 1800, Ebenezer Reid, a teacher, who preached and taught in Kingston till 1828 and who is mentioned in the 1802 report of the Edinburgh Society as "their" missionary, and a second catechist, name unknown, who is said to have died, as Bethune did, shortly after his arrival. And in the absence of further information, there we must leave the matter.

These then are the manuscript records of the Scottish Missionary Society so far as they are known to exist, and although the ink had faded and the men who wrote them have passed away, the living churches they helped to create have advanced and progressed far beyond the dreams of the most enthusiastic.